



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

so suggestive. It gives us what we should expect after reading the words of the preface. "The attitude taken in the volume is neither that purely of the scholar nor that of a man wholly immersed in practical life. A teacher in ethics or religion occupies a position between these two classes. He will read extensively and think a great deal; but his deepest convictions and beliefs will be shaped while he is seeking to apply his reading or thinking to the questions of life as they come up from day to day."

SAMUEL M. CROTHERS.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BELIEF; OR, LAW IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

By The Duke of Argyll, K.G., K.T. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1896. Pp. xxii., 555.

In this very remarkable and interesting work the Duke of Argyll argues that natural teleology is the indispensable basis of religion, and that Christianity, which alone fits this basis, furnishes the only completely rational theory of conduct. Thus teleology bears the weight of our author's whole superstructure of belief.

Two methods are open to the natural teleologist. He may reason from the conception of the world as a world of law, and proceed deductively to show that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without the will of a controlling providence; or else he may reason from particular facts of adaptation, especially in the organic world, and conclude that mind is supreme in nature. The Duke, having in his "Reign of Law" sufficiently developed the former method, proceeds in the work before us chiefly or solely upon the latter. He contends, on the one hand, that purposiveness—the true criterion of mind—is not merely inferred, but directly perceived in organic forms and processes; that mankind have always, as a rule, perceived it; and that this perception is indelibly recorded in the etymology and grammatical structure of language. On the other hand, he wages war with certain naturalistic writers who, ignoring or not perceiving what the vast majority of mankind perceive, deny all knowledge of natural purposiveness, and discount its alleged evidence as the result of mere misconstruction. These writers the Duke charges with "garbling" the report which they should give of the phenomena of organic life, with inconsistency, or even with "conscious and deliberate juggling with words."

It is well known that the teleological argument in all its forms has been for centuries the theme of discussion and criticism. Kant

and Mill agree as to its persuasiveness. "It would be difficult," says Mill, "to find a stronger argument in favor of theism than that the eye must have been made by one who sees, and the ear by one who hears." But this argument has been shown by the greatest of philosophical critics to suffer from intrinsic difficulties of a peculiarly grave character. What the reader notices in the "Philosophy of Belief" is that these intrinsic difficulties are almost overlooked. For aught that this work has benefited thereby, the critical labor bestowed by Kant on the conception of natural purposiveness has been merely wasted. But fresh difficulties have since Kant's time been created for the design argument from organic forms,—difficulties which may be called extrinsic, consisting in the alternative suggestion of natural selection, etc., as explaining the adaptation observable in such forms. We had thought that no natural teleologist could possibly ignore these difficulties. But the Duke ignores them, saying dogmatically that "natural selection, as an agency in developing structures prior to their functional use, if it has any meaning at all, is simply a mental and directing choice." He also declares that purpose *must* be assumed as mediating between the inchoate and matured states of organic existence. This is edifying to one who has never doubted. But the *naïf* disciple of the Duke, who turns from the confident utterances of the latter to read the opinions of, let us say, Mr. Romanes, in his "Influence of Science upon Religion," will find much to dishearten him or cause him real trouble, for which the "Philosophy of Belief" provides no help whatever.

The Duke's argument for natural teleology from the implications of common speech does not justify the importance which he attaches to it. Perhaps the most general truth which can be enunciated respecting popular speech is that while it fairly corresponds to the needs of practical life, it falls far short of satisfying the requirements of the best thought of any generation. Primitive languages represent primitive modes of looking at things. The mind of the savage is disposed to personification. He is apt to regard a curious piece of mechanism—*e.g.*, a watch—as a living thing, and to ascribe to it attributes of intelligence and will. This disposition is no doubt registered in language. One of the great obstacles in the way of modern science arises from the imperfection of the instrument of expression,—the subtly misleading associations of words. The progress of science is marked by a progressive, but very slow, correction of speech. If it were quite true that, as the

Duke states, "language is the automatic expression of, and witness to, that which we really do see, all the more to be trusted because of the fact that it is an unconscious witness;" and if "words cannot report anything which does not really shine in upon the self-consciousness of man, or which he does not really see;" the words, "spook" and "fairy," should have objective existences corresponding to them, and from the words "sunset" and "sunrise" we should be justified in inferring the falsity of the heliocentric view of the solar system. The Duke's argument from language proves nothing at all, just because it would prove too much.

Scarcely less surprising, however, is his contention that purposiveness in natural objects is "directly perceived." To us it appears to be in all cases—even in the action of all persons except ourselves—an inference, and one as to which mistakes are very easily made. All so-called perception is mixed up with inference, but of the perception of purposiveness this is especially true. The Duke's assertion of the direct perception of purpose in organic forms is simply the result of defective psychology.

He argues that though we are ignorant of ulterior ends in nature, we may and do possess certitude respecting proximate ends. This is part of his general position that our "knowledge, despite its limitations, is true as far as it goes." "True" in this connection is a difficult term to explain satisfactorily. It bears totally different meanings for disciples of Hume and Hegel. But "true as far as it goes" is a highly fallacious phrase, and may actually be equivalent to "false." Not only Kepler's Laws (the Duke's illustration) are true as far as they go, but the Ptolemaic astronomy was true as far as it went. It possessed truth of a relative sort, *i.e.*, in proportion as it explained the celestial phenomena. But as a whole it was false. The peculiarity of generalizations which are "true as far as they go" is that a more advanced or wider conception may, for aught we now know, completely overthrow them, reversing the stand-point from which they have taught us to regard the particular facts. Thus the Copernican conception reversed the stand point of the Ptolemaic. The essence of the dispute between natural teleologists and naturalists lies in the question whether the "proximate ends" might not, when looked at from the stand-point of natural selection, lose their character of finality altogether, just as the terms "sunrise" and "sunset" have lost the meaning which they originally bore.

All the weakness attaching to the Duke's natural teleology af-

fects his ethics and religion likewise. Of his religious theory we do not here speak. Of his Ethics the most important thing to be said is that he bestows on the subject no systematic or general treatment. Ethics for him is the Ethics of Christianity. In his chapter dealing with this subject, the ethical relation between man and man is represented as flowing from the relation between man and God.

The faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong is "divinely implanted." The feeling of duty to our fellows is seen and felt in the light of an obligation to a known God. The moral feeling is reduced to "love," or the feeling of brotherhood and comradeship. The feeling of obligation tends to become submerged or lost in this, so that "love" would be "the whole fulfilling of the law." What the "good" for man is the Duke does not pronounce, except by describing it as a form of "blessedness" to be divinely bestowed hereafter. With the question of hedonism and its antagonists he does not concern himself. But pure altruism he holds to be an unnatural theory of conduct. Closely following Butler, he regards the notion of "desert" as inseparable from that of right and wrong. The connections between right conduct and reward, wrong conduct and punishment, are not merely arbitrary connections. The consequences of good or evil conduct as such follow organically upon the latter, as part of the divine scheme. If virtue is not always rewarded or vice punished; if we are perplexed at seeing the good man miserable and the bad man prosperous; yet we must with the apostle trust that "all things work together for good to them that love God." The question of the origin of evil under the control of omnipotent wisdom and goodness is one which the Duke does not profess to answer. He suggests, however, that the answer must be found in the conception of man's will as free, but rebellious against God. Virtue without freedom would be impossible. Vice is, therefore, the inevitable concomitant of virtue in such an imperfect creature as man. The doctrine (of, *e.g.*, Höffding) that without determinism no moral conduct and no moral theory would be possible, does not seem to have occurred to the Duke as even conceivable.

He makes God immanent in nature, and regularly treats the laws of nature as laws of God. This involves two different conceptions of law. The Duke does not confound these, but regards them as consistent, though distinct, aspects of the one fact. The uniformities of nature are the edicts or ordinances of God's will. If any

except "sensationalist" morality is to be sustained, this seems to be a dangerous identification. If nothing happens except according to natural law, and if natural law is the law of God, it is hard to escape from the conclusion, that whatever is (or has been, or shall be) is right. We need not dwell upon this. Such, however, is the Duke's philosophy, in ethics as in teleology, that at every seeming advance we are plunged deeper and deeper into mystery. We are led through a cloud of metaphysics by a guide who believes himself and his followers to be—at least most of the time—walking in the clear light of reason.

But it would be unjust to close without referring to another aspect of this work, which makes it in our opinion not only interesting but valuable. Though the author does not seem to be fully aware how deep and how widely diffused are the sources of the scepticism which he endeavors to counteract; and though, as a consequence, many of his arguments are pointless, superficial, and useless for their purpose, no reader can help being struck with the wealth of information—scientific rather than philosophical—which the work contains. A note of impatience is here and there discernible in it; an intolerance of opposition, and a seeming inability to recognize the fact that such opposition is sincere,—not to say well-founded. The Duke's own belief is so strong that to him unbelief seems incredible. He would have other men employ his own glasses. All that ardor and eloquence can do is done by him to persuade them. His zeal is admirable. As one reads, one feels somehow the better for the buoyancy and strength of the writer's spirit. Indeed, "The Philosophy of Belief"—we say it with modest confidence—could only be the work of a strong as well as a good man. What the special theologians, for whom it seems to have been chiefly intended, may think of it, we cannot venture to predict. But its tone will cheer and inspire many readers whom its arguments may fail to convince.

JOHN I. BEARE.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

FRANCESCO D'ASSISI E ALCUNI DEI SUOI RECENTI BIOGRAFI. Memoria letta all' Accademia di Scienze Morali e Politiche della Società Reale di Napoli, dal Socio Raffaele Mariano. Napoli: Tipografia della Regia Università, 1896. 8vo. Pp. 208.

The interest attaching to this work is due not so much to the manner in which its subject is treated or the results arrived at, as